



Empire Justice Center

Making the law work for all New Yorkers

Albany ♦ Rochester ♦ Westchester ♦ Long Island

VP for Policy and Government Relations

Albany - Full time, Exempt position

Empire Justice Center, a highly respected, statewide legal services organization, is seeking a Vice President for Policy and Government Relations to join our team. This is an opportunity to lead Empire Justice Center's highly respected policy team as part of one of the most effective anti-poverty organizations in New York State.

Empire Justice Center attracts and employs dedicated, determined and passionate advocates who, together, make a significant impact on the lives of low-income and marginalized New Yorkers. We achieve our successes through direct legal representation and high impact litigation, legislative and administrative advocacy, and by providing training and technical assistance to other advocates who are working towards the same goals.

With offices in Rochester, Albany, Yonkers, White Plains and Central Islip on Long Island, our organization offers staff an exciting and dynamic, mission driven working environment and a strong commitment to teamwork, diversity, and personal/professional development.

The Position

As a member of the Leadership Team, the Vice President/Director for Policy and Government Relations is responsible for leading the Policy and Government Relations work of Empire Justice Center. This includes providing leadership both internally and externally, assuring internal structural supports for Empire Justice Center's active policy advocacy and government relations initiatives, providing strategic input in these areas to staff and coalitions, and keeping Empire Justice Center focused on high impact systemic change and access to justice for marginalized communities in the areas outside New York City. This position reports directly to the President & CEO.

This is a critical role, both internally and externally. This person will supervise three dedicated policy staff people and provide leadership to over a dozen other staff doing substantive policy work in 7 practice groups. Through a team based approach they will develop and implement a pro-active state policy agenda that is based on Empire Justice Center's client work. Strong communication skills are essential – internally, working successfully with staff and externally, public speaking, meeting with high level elected officials and proofing and providing feedback on written materials are essential parts of the job.

With a heavy emphasis on a team approach, the candidate must be mission driven, strategic, thoughtful, creative, flexible and responsive in a fast paced, high energy work environment.

Primary responsibilities will include:

- Leading the Policy Team in development of the organization's annual policy agenda and developing a plan for its implementation, including work with other organizations, coalitions, media, material development and key policymakers;
- Ensuring compliance with all state and federal lobbying laws and necessary reporting on lobbying activities;
- Developing and maintaining a robust government relations strategy to advance the efficacy of Empire Justice Center's policy priorities and public profile;
- Overseeing the management and communications related to all policy work of the organization at all levels, ensuring consistent branding and positions on issues, looking to continually improve internal information sharing and reporting on all areas related to policy and government relations;
- Providing strategic planning and participating in creation of communication strategies from research and analysis for reports and fact sheets to digital and online tools to support advocacy efforts;
- Being a spokesperson for Empire Justice Center in the public arena, related to policy issues and educating and increasing awareness of our work; testifying at hearings, speaking at press conferences, conferences, with the media and other venues as needed.
- Participating in organization's Leadership Team representing the policy and government relations aspects of the organization's work;
- Other duties as assigned.

Skills

- Proven supervisory, leadership and project management skills in the context of a multi-office organization;
- Effective decision making skills that balance overall organizational and leadership objectives individual project needs;
- Strong interpersonal skills, the ability to cultivate partnerships and to work with a diverse workforce, both internally and externally.
- Ability to shift priorities while working in a fast paced environment with multiple competing objectives;
- Strong knowledge of all elements of advocacy campaign development, management and execution in multiple areas of law;
- Ability to lead a data driven policy agenda, working at multiple levels of government simultaneously;
- Highly effective and persuasive written and verbal skills;

Qualifications

- At least 8 years relevant policy and communications experience, including campaign development and coalition leadership;
- A demonstrated history and commitment to achieving positive systemic change and expanding protections for low income and marginalized persons through policy advocacy
- Exceptional written and verbal communications skills
- Extensive experience with NYS legislative and budget process, including engagement in legislative advocacy, strongly preferred.
- Experience with managing of JCOPE reporting strongly preferred.

Salary and Benefits

Salary is commensurate with experience and based on the organization's salary scale. Empire Justice Center offers a generous benefits package, including health insurance, pension and life insurance, vacation, holiday, personal and sick time. We are an organization that supports and encourages a work/life balance.

Empire Justice Center is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer and desires a diverse work force. People of color, women, persons with disabilities, persons who are elderly, gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender are welcomed and encouraged to apply.

Position available immediately. Applications accepted until position is filled. To apply, e-mail a cover letter, resume, and three professional references to; employment@empirejustice.org Please include, **VP for Policy and Government Relations, First/Last Name** to the subject line of the email. ***Please apply by August 21, 2019.*** No phone calls or hard copies please. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

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employment@empirejustice.org